

GOVERNOR JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM

Friday, April 13, 2007

This is Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Next week Detroit, at Cobo Hall, will host the annual Society of Automotive Engineers World Congress. This is a gathering of thousands of engineers and industry insiders, who collaborate and learn from each other, and put their best innovations on display for the world.

The theme of the 2007 SAE World Congress is “Engineering for Global Sustainable Mobility – It’s Up to Us.”

With their focus this year on sustainability and environmentally conscious technological advancements, the SAE’s mantra that “It’s Up to Us” speaks to all Michigan citizens, and especially our entrepreneurs. Michigan put the world on wheels, and in the global economy new challenges are creating new opportunities. We have an opportunity right now to lead the nation in developing renewable fuels and alternative energy sources that will drive sustainability in the automotive industry and beyond.

Frankly, the SAE’s theme speaks to Michigan in a number of ways. In the midst of outsourcing, downsizing, cutbacks and buyouts that are wrenching our state economy, this SAE event is a reminder that, for all of our challenges, Michigan is still at the center of the automotive universe.

We continue to lead the globe in advanced automotive design and manufacturing technology – in fact, we have more automotive research and development centers in Michigan than all of the other states, plus Canada, plus Mexico, combined.

The economic plan that I’ve set in motion is building on our automotive heritage while we grow new segments of our Michigan economy. We’re diversifying into alternative energy, life sciences, and homeland security to create good-paying jobs that cannot be outsourced. This is our future, and the engineers of the SAE are developing some of the innovations that will get us there.

With the world’s automotive industry coming to Michigan this week, we have a great opportunity to pitch our state to businesses. So, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation is setting up a pavilion in Cobo Hall that will feature Michigan success stories – companies like AVL Powertrain Engineering, Tesla Motors and FEV Engine Tech that are investing and growing in Michigan so they can continue to engineer components for the cars of today and the cars of tomorrow. And, the MEDC will also be offering information on ways that we are working to bring companies to Michigan and spur further growth and job creation.

If you have a chance, I hope you can make it down to Cobo Hall in Detroit for the 2007 SAE World Congress – check out all of the cool, cutting-edge innovations on display, and see for yourself the amazing opportunities we have in Michigan to push forward and lead the nation and world in the new economy.

Thank you for listening.